

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Mohr

DATE: February 10, 1964

FROM : C. D. DeLoach

SUBJECT: ALLEGATION THAT OSWALD
WAS AN FBI INFORMANT

Referenced my memorandum to you February 7, 1964, indicating that Jay Sourwine, Chief Counsel, Senate Internal Security Subcommittee (SISS), had indicated, following pressure being put on him, that he would contact his source of information to see if that source would talk to me relative to the above-captioned allegation. Sourwine had also indicated, and had reiterated several times, that his source had confirmed this allegation with CIA.

Sourwine called at approximately 2:30 PM, February 10, 1964. He advised he had contacted his source and in view of the seriousness of the situation, his source had agreed to be identified. He named his source as Colonel Philip Corso who is currently employed by Senator Strom Thurmond (D-S.C.). Sourwine indicated that Corso had agreed to being interviewed.

I contacted Colonel Corso in Senator Thurmond's office at approximately 3:15 PM, February 10, 1964. Harry Dent and Fred Buzhardt, Senator Thurmond's Administrative and Legislative Assistants, sat in on the interview. Both men have been very cooperative in the past. I had not previously met Colonel Corso, however, understand that he formerly worked for General Trudeau in Army Intelligence and had some contacts with FBI at that time. Colonel Corso, upon meeting him, and throughout the interview, gave me the definite impression of being a rather shifty-eyed individual who fashions himself a great intelligence expert. As a matter of fact, it was quite difficult to pin him down with questions inasmuch as he insisted on expounding his theories rather than sticking to specifics.

I told Colonel Corso of the information received from Sourwine and that he had been named as the source. I told him the allegation was absolutely false. The point was made that Mr. Hoover had submitted a sworn affidavit to the Warren Commission emphatically denying the allegation and that I desired Colonel Corso to read the affidavit at this time. I told him additionally that if his allegation had been made to other people, I would like to know the names of these people so that they could be confronted. He told me the only other person he had discussed the allegation with was Senator Thurmond.

Enclosure 11 1964

1 - Mr. Belmont

1 - Mr. Sullivan

1 - Mr. Rosen

1 - Mr. M. A. Jones

CDD:ejr (6)

~~CLOSURE~~

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SOVIET SECTION

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Colonel Corso stated he did not need to read the affidavit I handed him inasmuch as he would take the FBI's word that Oswald was not an informant. I told him regardless of his confidence he should read the affidavit. He then scanned it quite hurriedly and handed it back to me.

I told Colonel Corso that I would have to insist that he reveal the identity of his source within CIA. He stated he could not do this inasmuch as his source represented "groups" or "individuals" that had been friends of his when he was handling intelligence for the Army. He stated he did not like to violate their confidence. I told him he should realize that this allegation was a very serious one which could do considerable damage to the FBI if it became widely publicized. I mentioned additionally that his refusal might, of course, result in his being subpoenaed or requested to testify before the Warren Commission concerning the withholding of evidence.

Colonel Corso began to backtrack. He stated that his sources had merely told him that they knew the FBI had been in contact with Oswald prior to the assassination of the President. He quickly added that his sources within CIA also felt that Oswald's activity, while in the Soviet Union, represented a State Department operation. Colonel Corso indicated that "if" Oswald had been an informant, while in the Soviet Union, he would have submitted reports to three U. S. employees of the American Embassy in Moscow. He named these individuals as: Angeli, John Vincent Abidian and Hugh Montgomery. Corso stated that Angeli and Montgomery had been declared persona non grata by the Soviet Government and told to leave the Soviet Union. Corso indicated that while he was still with the Army, he received a tip that the three named individuals had received reports from a double agent within the Soviet Union. He stated this double agent could have been Oswald. I asked him if he had any specifics or proof in this regard. He stated he could not prove any of these statements. He then added that this entire matter might be an assumption on the part of CIA inasmuch as his sources had no definite facts whatsoever.

I told Colonel Corso that I wanted to go back over our conversation and to be as specific as possible. I asked him point-blank if his sources within CIA had named Oswald as an FBI informant to him. I asked him for a direct answer. He slowly replied that "groups" or "persons" within CIA, whom he had known for a long time, had told him that Oswald could have been a source of information for the FBI. He stated the same "groups" or "persons" also indicated that Oswald's residence in the Soviet Union represented a State Department operation. Corso added that there was a Communist Party member supposedly in Texas by the name of "Stanford" who knew that Oswald had been an FBI source of information and had related this fact to other parties. I asked

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Colonel Corso how he knew this. He stated he could not recall his source of information in this regard, however, apparently "Stanford" had been interviewed by some one and had given them this information. I told Colonel Corso that his ability to be nonspecific was somewhat amazing. He told me he was well-versed in the intelligence game and knew how CIA and the State Department operated. He stated he had no sympathy for CIA inasmuch as that organization had quite often failed to cooperate with him when he was operating with intelligence.

At this stage of the questioning, Colonel Corso again approached the melodramatic by emphatically claiming that he had been concerned only in this matter because he was afraid that the communists were promoting a deliberate smear against the FBI. I asked why he brought in the Communist Party when he had originally claimed that his information had come from CIA. He stated that the information furnished by the communist, "Stanford," apparently represented a deliberate smear attempt on the part of the communists.

I told Colonel Corso that I wanted him to think about this matter and to particularly consider the seriousness of the allegations. I told him he should give me a call by February 11, 1964, and give me a definite answer as to whether he would identify his sources of information. He agreed to do so. I told him also that regardless of whether he identifies his sources or not, we still plan to protest to CIA the falseness and looseness of such allegations. I told Colonel Corso, in the presence of Dent and Buzhardt, that he had seen me carefully making notes during our entire conversation and that I planned to hold him to the substance of those notes.

At this point, Senator Thurmond entered the room and I advised him completely of the falseness of the allegations and exhibited to him the affidavit in question. Senator Thurmond stated he did not need to read the affidavit inasmuch as he had known the allegations were false all along. I told Senator Thurmond that I had requested his assistant, Colonel Corso, to reveal his sources of information so that the FBI could definitely disprove, once and for all, the falseness of the allegations that Oswald was an FBI informant. The Senator replied that he hoped Colonel Corso could comply with our request.

ACTION:

I will follow with Colonel Corso re this on February 11, 1964. There is attached a yellow colored slip of paper which Colonel Corso handed me naming the

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ACTION CONTINUED:

three American State Department employees who "might" have had contact with Oswald in the Soviet Union. This should be made a matter of record in our files. It is suggested that no action be taken to contact CIA at this time until we find out whether or not Colonel Corso will identify his sources. Frankly, considering Colonel Corso's personality and evasiveness, there is a distinct possibility that he made up this allegation strictly based upon his own theories. I will, of course, follow him closely until we get an answer as to his alleged sources of information within CIA.

HIN

[Handwritten signature]

DA

[Handwritten signature]